

VZCZCXYZ0002
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHKU #1741 1351337
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 151337Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4478
INFO RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS KUWAIT 001741

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FOR NEA/ARP; LONDON FOR LESLIE TSOU; PARIS FOR ZEYA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM KIRF UK RS KU RELIGIOUS FREEDOM](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAIT PIONEERS ISLAMIC MODERATION MOVEMENT;
CONFERENCES SCHEDULED FOR LONDON AND WASHINGTON

REF: A. KUWAIT 806

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 882

[1](#)1. (U) PolOff met Naser Mohammad Al-Ajmi, Secretary General of the Higher Committee on Strengthening Moderation (known as the Committee for Creating Programs and Plans Responsible for Protecting Youth from the Phenomena of Deviant Behavior and Religious Extremism until early 2006), on May 9 to discuss the committee's activities. The GOK formed the inter-governmental committee with representatives from the ministries of Social Affairs and Labor, Interior, Education, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, and Information. The Ministry of Awqaf is the lead agency on the Committee, and announced in a March 11 press conference that its new five-year plan includes the promotion of moderation as a key goal (ref B).

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Moderation Committee has held two major international conferences in Kuwait to support moderation and religious tolerance: "Moderation: a Way of Living" in May 2005 and "We and the Other" in March 2006 (ref A). Al-Ajmi said Kuwait will fund conferences in London in September 2006, in Washington in December 2006, and in Russia (date to be determined), all under the patronage of Amir Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, to spread the idea of moderate Islam among the Islamic community as well as to convey to Westerners that Islam is a religion of moderation. Press reports on May 15 announced that the conference will be held in London this May 26-28, but Al-Ajmi told PolOff that the events in May are preparatory meetings for the September conference.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The committee has also commissioned several studies. The first of these was set to come out May 13, though its official release has been delayed. PolOff received an unofficial draft from Al-Ajmi. The study examines what causes youths to become extremists and includes research from several Gulf countries. Its goal is to help find ways of cutting off extremism at its roots. The Committee has undertaken two information campaigns (October 2005 and April 2006) in Kuwaiti schools to try to steer Kuwaiti children away from extremism. The campaigns received extensive press coverage and Al-Ajmi said the response from the students was enthusiastic.

[1](#)4. (U) This September, the committee will also open the World Moderation Center. Based in Kuwait and headed by former Sudanese Minister of Islamic Affairs Esam Ahmad Al-Basheer, the center will undertake training, translation projects, academic studies and information campaigns, with a special emphasis on electronic media, to support moderation and fight extremism throughout the Islamic world.

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